

What is Claimed is:

1 1. An incoming mail monitoring system, said system comprises:
2 one or more data bases that stores unique information affixed to
3 mail and identities of mailers ;
4 a plurality of receptacles that reads and stores the unique
5 information affixed to mail after the mail enters the interior of the receptacle;
6 a data center that stores the unique information affixed to mail and
7 receives the unique information from the receptacles to determine if the mailer is
8 permitted to enter mail in the receptacle; and
9 means coupled to the data center and the recipient of the mail for
10 communicating to the recipient, information stored in the data center about the
11 mail.

1 2. The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the means comprises:
2 a telephone; and
3 a voice response unit that is coupled to the telephone and the data
4 center.

1 3. The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the means comprises:
2 a computer coupled to the data center via the Internet.

1 4. The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient transmits
2 recipient and mailer name and address information appearing on the mail to the
3 data center.

1 5. The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient transmits
2 coded information appearing on the mail to the data center.

1 6. The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the receptacle units include
2 a scanner that reads the mail.

1 7. The system claimed in claim 6, wherein the scanner is located in a
2 control chamber.

1 8. The system claimed in claim 7, wherein the control chamber has a
2 locked door for isolating suspect mail.

1 9. The system claimed in claim 7, wherein the interior of the
2 receptacle comprises:
3 an inner chamber that receives mail from the control chamber that
4 is not suspected of having life- harming material.

1 10. The system claimed in claim 9, wherein the inner chamber has a
2 locked door in which when open mail may be removed from the inner chamber.

1 11. The system claimed in claim 7, further including a slot for
2 depositing mail into the control chamber.

1 12. The system claimed in claim 11, further including means for closing
2 the slot when the mail in the control chamber is suspected of containing life
3 harming substances.

1 13. The system claimed in claim 12, further comprising means for
2 indicating a message indicating the status of the receptacle.

1 14. The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the receptacles includes the
2 time and date that the mail was deposited in the receptacle.

1 15. The system claimed in claim 14, wherein the receptacles, includes
2 the location of the receptacle.

1 16. The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the receptacle unit
2 includes: means for informing the post of possibility of the presence of life
3 harming material in the mail.